

REPORT OF AN ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF A PROPOSED SHORELINE MAINTENANCE PROJECT AT DICKERSON LAKE, FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY

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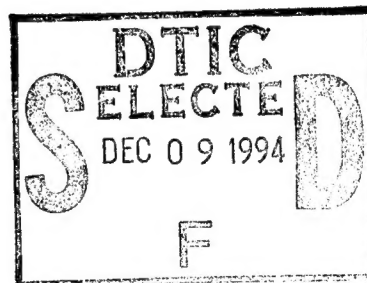
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The areas to be affected by a shoreline regrading project at Dickerson Lake were examined by pedestrian survey on 3 February, 1993, by the Staff Archeologist for the DEH, Fort Knox, Steven D. Ruple. All areas to be affected by the regrading, including the route of the proposed haul road and dump area, were examined and found to consist of disturbed soils. In most areas, topsoil had been removed at some time in the past to a depth of 0.7 meters or more. It is unlikely that any in situ cultural resources exist at or near the project location. Therefore, the project should have no effect on significant cultural resources and may proceed without objection regarding cultural resources.

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Summary

The areas to be affected by a shoreline regrading project at Dickerson Lake were examined by pedestrian survey on 3 February, 1993, by the Staff Archeologist for the DEH, Fort Knox, Steven D. Ruple. All areas to be affected by the regrading, including the route of the proposed haul road and dump area, were examined and found to consist of disturbed soils. In most areas, topsoil had been removed at some time in the past to a depth of 0.7 meters or more. It is unlikely that any in situ cultural resources exist at or near the project location. Therefore, the project should have no effect on significant cultural resources and may proceed without objection regarding cultural resources.

Background

Donald W. Sheroan, Supervisor, Fish and Wildlife Section, DEH, submitted a Record of Environmental Consideration for a proposed project at Dickerson Lake and some points southeast of the lake (Figures 1 and 2). As a course of review, it was determined that the area had not been examined for archeological or historical remains in the past, and would require an examination. A party consisting of Donald Sheroan, Michael Brandenburg, Wildlife Biologist, Teresa Vera, Botanist, and Steven Ruple, Archeologist, examined the area of the proposed undertaking.

The proposed undertaking consists of using heavy equipment to excavate silted-in shorelines at the lake and to reduce the steep slope of the banks. The excavated materials will be hauled in trucks along an existing dirt roadway from the lake to the southeast which connects to a dirt road, and along that road to a proposed dump site east of the moto-cross track (Figure 2). One or two hundred feet of the route used will have to be created to connect the existing trails with the dump site.

Results

Historical maps on file at DEH were consulted which show the owners from whom the lands of Fort Knox were taken; outlines of all structures appear on the map containing the project area; this map¹ dates to 1919, and the pertinent portion is illustrated in Figure 3. After careful measurements to correlate the data with that of present-day maps, the 1919 map shows that all structures and living areas lay along Baker Road, and within 400 feet of its centerline. No structures were recorded near the site of the present-day lake, which is man-made, nor do the existing or proposed roads appear on the map or go through areas where structures are depicted on the 1919 map.

An examination of the project area began at the dump site southeast of the lake. This site is east of the old moto-cross track and roughly adjacent to it. The site has been heavily disturbed due to at least two different activities. The causes are subject to speculation, but some appear to be related to military training at a much earlier time, and others appear to be connected with the construction of the moto-cross track. The supposed military training disturbance consists of a deep, elongated, water-filled trench south of the dump site, and some disturbance of soils around the trench. The southeast end of the trench is log-lined with a steel I-beam across the top. There are no visible clues to its age beyond the trees lining the bank, which appear to be in the 20 to 30 year age range. The area east of the moto-

¹ This map is on file in DEH with copies in Buildings 57 and 112, entitled, *Camp Knox Real Estate Map*, compiled in May, 1919.

cross track has been disturbed across a wide area north of Baker Road, probably for construction of some of the jumping hills and berms at the moto-cross track. Scattered sections of less disturbed soil suggest that borrowing and other construction activities at the moto-cross track reduced normal ground surface approximately 0.5-0.7 meters in some areas. Soil showing between the weeds is a red clay subsoil. Standing water can be seen in some low sections.

The walk along the proposed road alignment encountered similarly disturbed soils, including a dirt embankment over a meter in height. Clay subsoils were visible all along the path to the more established dirt road. This road proceeds in a fairly straight line to a corner, where the turn will be straightened somewhat. From there, the road proceeds to the lake some 100 meters northwest. Along its length, the road is sunken from the surrounding soils from long use. The soils north of the road have suffered spotty impacts from military activities in the past; for example, a very early tank turret sits beside a trail that runs beside two large excavations, and a sand-bagged emplacement can be seen in the trees. The rest of the soils north of the road are lightly to moderately disturbed. The area south of the road has been heavily disturbed. The project will not deviate from the roadway along this part of the project.

At the lake, the disturbance will be heavy, but confined to the immediate area of the shorelines. The lake is said to date to the construction of the "new" Highway 31W, which was built in 1939. The lake may be the site of borrowing of substrate materials for the highway; the highway is elevated by a long berm along that section. The banks of the lake are nearly vertical on the east side, and are steep everywhere. An examination of the banks exposed only subsoil capped with a thin layer of humic clays somewhat browner than the deeper subsoil. The original topsoils and some subsoils have been stripped from the banks and are visible in profile at distances of two meters to 20 meters (estimated) from the banks, beginning at the tree line. The project will not remove trees or approach the tree line closer than the length of the tractor on which the equipment is mounted. To all observers, the perception was that the project will only encounter subsoils which were deeply buried prior to the construction of Highway 31W.

Conclusion

Since the disturbance associated with the project will be confined to previously disturbed soils, it is the opinion of the staff archeologist that the project will have no effect on significant cultural resources. The project will be monitored part-time by the staff archeologist to insure that no unforeseen buried cultural features are lost. The Supervisor of the Fish and Wildlife Section stated that the locations of the haul road and dump areas are flexible and can be moved to protect any unforeseen and undiscovered cultural resources.

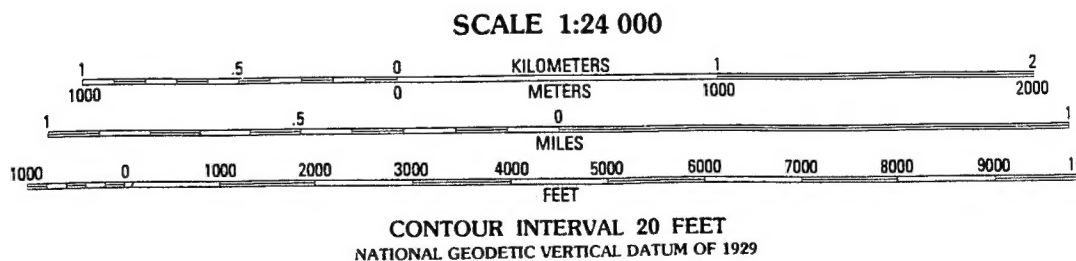
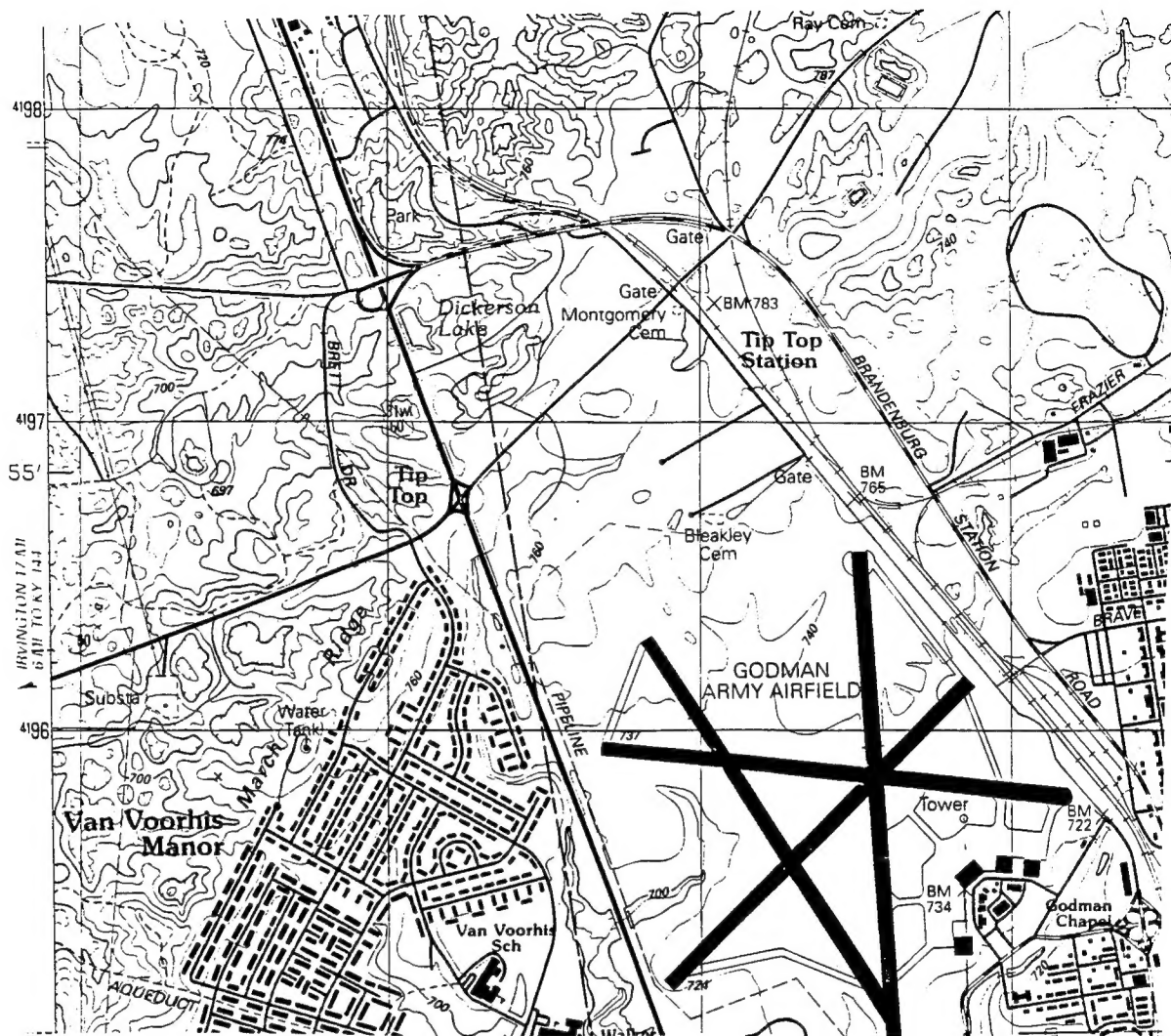


Figure 1. Portion of USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle map, Fort Knox, Ky.-Ind., edition of 1991, showing the project area.

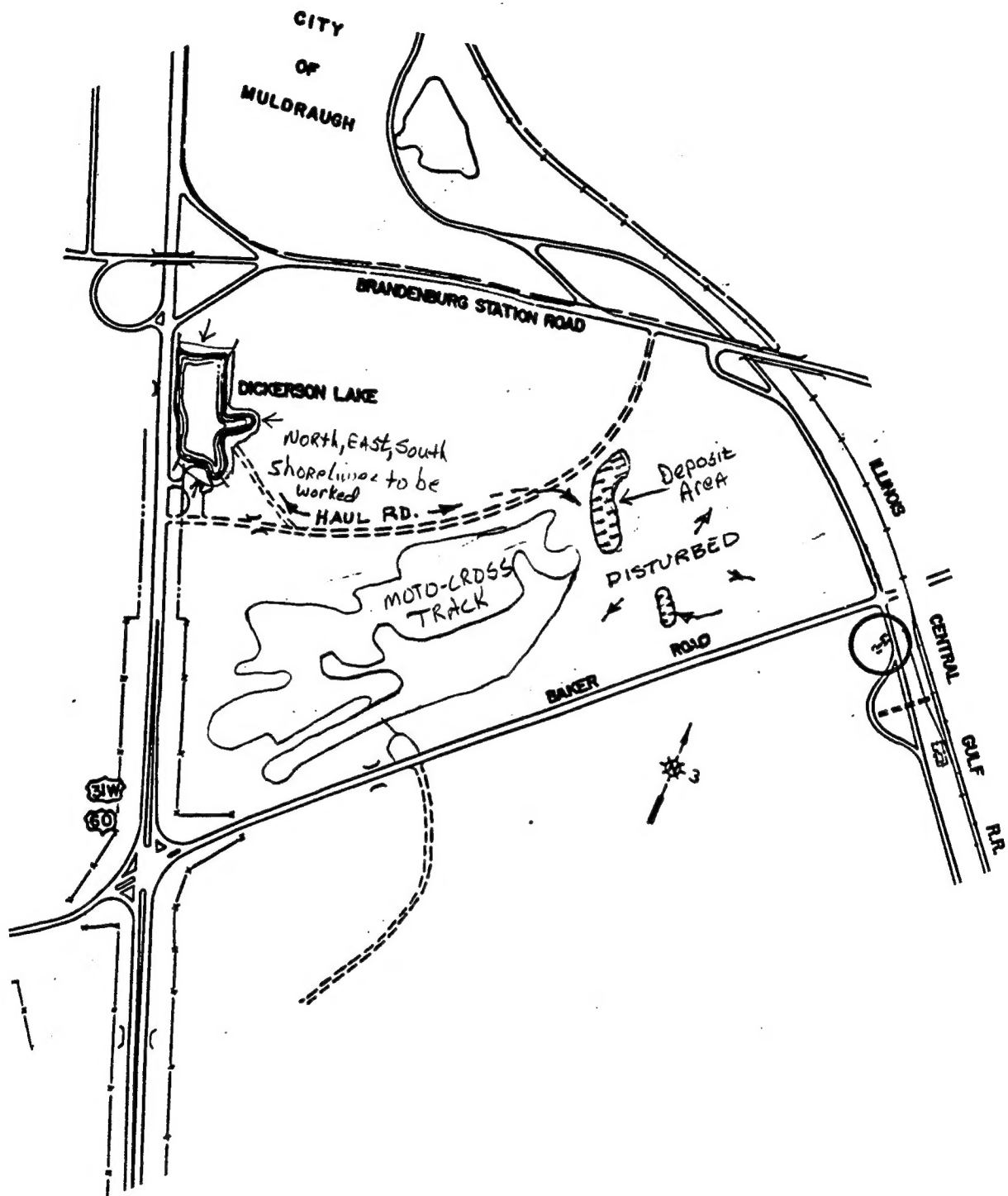


Figure 2. Detailed map of Dickerson Lake Shoreline Project area.

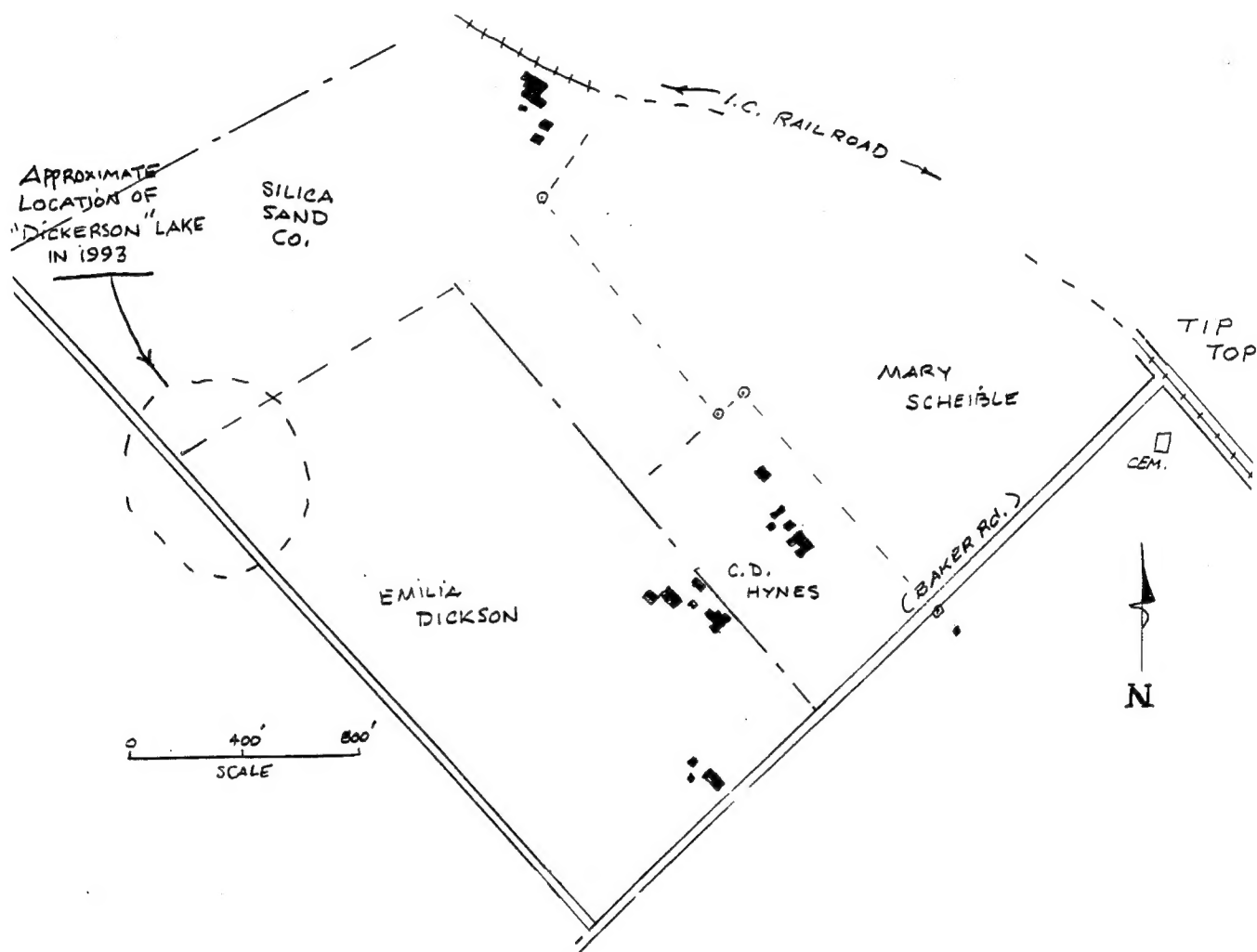


Figure 3. Copy of portions of real estate map dated 1919 showing general area of shoreline project; the original scale is approximately 400 feet to the inch before reduction; a scale line is drawn on the map. The southeast corner of sheet C.F. 1640 and the southwest corner of sheet C.F. 1641 are shown joined along Longitude 85 degrees, 59 minutes; the bottom margin is at Latitude 37 degrees 55 minutes.